

C

\$100 MILLION SCHOOL

STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIP, INTEGRITY, AND SERVICE

Collierville has long had a tradition of excellence in education. Our quality schools and highly trained educators have helped to attract new residents, enabling neighborhoods to grow and property values to remain strong. The workforce produced through our schools has helped to attract businesses, strengthening our economy.

But great schools don't happen by accident. They are the result of community effort and, in turn, a reflection of community priorities. Building and maintaining a strong public school system requires a community's total commitment, one that springs from civic and business leaders, education and town officials, parents and students alike. When we

display our commitment to quality education, we spotlight Collierville as a great place to live and work.

It was this commitment to excellence in education that led Collierville to form its own municipal school system in 2014. As Collierville's first superintendent of schools, Superintendent John Aitken has been steadily building on this commitment ever since. For evidence, you need to look no further than our new 450,000 square foot high school, located at East Shelby Drive and Sycamore Road.

Equipped with the cutting-edge technologies, the new school features a 1,000-seat auditorium, 107 regular classrooms, eight science labs, four music classrooms, 18 vocational classrooms, four computer

labs, a STEM lab, an auto mechanics shop, a commercial kitchen classroom, a welding studio and space for advanced manufacturing and agricultural education.

Sports facilities include a soccer field and fieldhouse, a 3,000-seat varsity gymnasium, a 750-seat auxiliary gymnasium, a 150-seat auxiliary gymnasium, a 5,000-seat baseball stadium along with a baseball field and fieldhouse, a softball field and fieldhouse and a lacrosse field. There is also an outdoor track and a marching band field.

"Our goal was to create a place where all students could acquire the knowledge and skills they need to succeed, and the inspiration they need to excel," said Aitken.

EPSOs

EARLY POST-SECONDARY OPPORTUNITIES

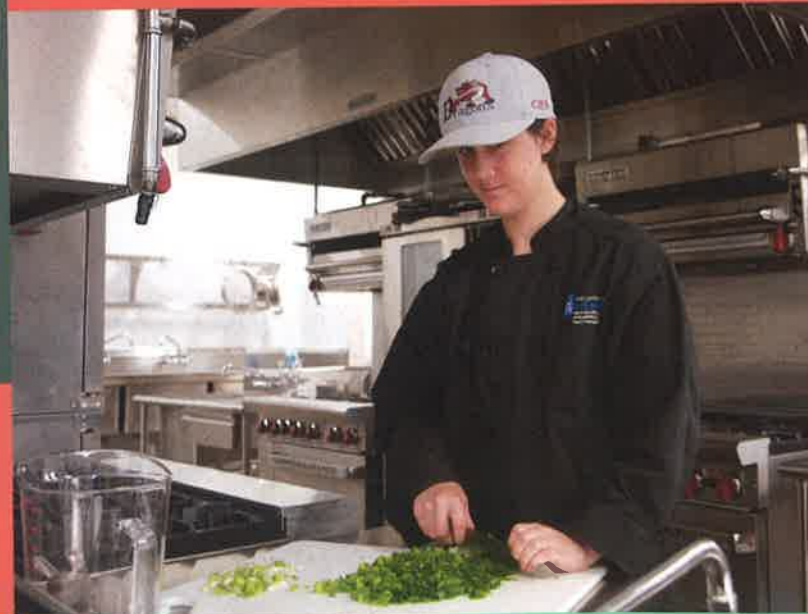
Every young person is not well-suited to four years of college. Some may be bright and ambitious, but not academically inclined. Some may lack direction but feel compelled to go to college because they've been told over and over that a college degree is necessary. Many will start college, drop out, then find themselves saddled with student loan debt, no promising job offers, and feelings of failure.

Fortunately, Collierville students now have an unprecedented opportunity to pursue college credits and/or industry training while they are still in high school. EPSOs allow students to explore a wide range of careers, earn industry certificates or credentials, early college credit - even Associates Degrees - all while they are still in high school.

Research shows that students who participate in early postsecondary programs are more likely to enroll and persist in postsecondary environments. Most students graduating from CHS will pursue a Bachelors Degree or higher at a four-year college or university but may offset the tuition costs through Advanced Placement, Dual Enrollment and CLEP credits earned in high school. Many will attend a community college, thanks to Tennessee Promise, a scholarship and mentoring program which provides two years of tuition-free attendance.

Some students will graduate from high school and go straight into the workforce. Thanks to the new CTE programs available at CHS, these students may enter the world well-equipped with soft-skills training and industry certificates needed for many of the high-demand jobs available in our area.

In today's global economy, there are many pathways to success. It's great to know that Collierville Schools are providing the opportunities our students need and deserve for a successful transition to college or career and a bright future.





BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

PIE (Collierville Partners In Education) is a 501(c)(3) organization operating under the umbrella of the Collierville Chamber. Created as a result of a series of roundtable discussions between local business and education leaders, PIE works to align education to create a workforce pipeline for local companies and to better prepare students for success in the 21st century.

By surveying local companies and utilizing labor demographics, PIE members and Superintendent John Aitken identified a list of careers that offered bright futures by promising to be high-paying and in high demand over the next two decades. Working hand-in-hand with partners from a variety of industries, Aitken was able to establish new and innovative vocational offerings that are second to none.

For example: Welding is a high-demand career in our area, so PIE reached out to a local fabricating company for their

expertise. Aitken and his team worked with a local post-secondary institution to create a new curriculum. Now the school offers courses in welding. The fabricating company even helped outfit the welding studio with equipment. The result is a win-win-win. The school benefits from the company's expertise and equipment donation. Students benefit from the opportunity to earn certifications in a high-demand career. The fabricating company benefits from their connection to a skilled workforce pipeline.

The high school continues to prepare students for college but "we realize not everyone will attend college," says Aitken. "So we're trying to jumpstart kids with certification programs and a history of college credits so they'll move up the chain in a job interview."

The high school's health science tract readies students for careers in healthcare and pharmacology. By working

with Lindsay Stencel, PIE Board Member, and Chief Administrative Officer at Baptist Memorial Hospital-Collierville, Aitken received guidance on coursework as well as the types of beds needed in the classroom. They were also able to create real-world clinical opportunities for students.

But partnerships with the business community are not limited to Collierville High School. There are many opportunities for companies to support our elementary and middle schools as well. For the past two years, volunteers representing seventeen industries have addressed 8th-grade students at both Collierville middle schools during Career Days. Designed to help students better understand how curriculum relates to career path opportunities, Career Days is just another way PIE and local business partners are helping to prepare students for success.

PIE Chairman Don Kitchens also

believes helping students learn about and aspire to careers in tomorrow's prominent fields is an integral and important aspect of nurturing and maintaining a talented and viable labor force. As the managing partner of Landers Ford, Kitchens played a major role in developing the Automotive Technology curriculum and facility at the new high school. Landers Ford provides ongoing support including guest speakers in the classroom, job shadowing opportunities, site visits to his facility, internships, equipment, etc.

Under Kitchen's leadership PIE has also been able to secure more than \$2 million in corporate sponsorships for Collierville Schools. In exchange for their financial support, local companies receive naming rights recognition on everything from the library to the Jumbotron. So, when teens and families attend a concert in the auditorium or pour into the football stadium for a Friday night game, they can't help but be reminded of the many local businesses and organizations that lend their generous support to our schools.